

[2 August, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) The number of repatriates from Kerala whose claims have been settled till 30.6.2001 is as follows:—

"A"	17822
"B"	61
"C"	7999
"D"	160

(d) Number of approved claims from Kerala pending to be disposed of is:

"A"	397
"B"	1 (claimant not traceable)
"C"	326
"D"	7

(e) The pending claims are due to non-traceability of claimants or death cases where the legal heirs have to obtain legal documents to establish their legal heirship. These are unavoidable delays for which the Bank is not responsible. The Bank, however, advertises the names of the untraceable claimants in India and the Special Kuwait Cell (SKC) does so through the Embassy of India, Kuwait. Wherever and whenever the genuine claimants contact the Bank or SKC, prompt steps are taken to ensure expeditious disbursement of compensation provided the claimants complete formalities quickly. Where the claimant does not fulfill the documentation required by the Bank, delays occur for which neither SKC nor the concerned Bank is responsible. Despite the shortcomings, it is SKC's endeavour to ensure early payment with the least harassment to the claimant.

Relaxation in US Sanction Imposed on India

1276. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public opinion in the United States of America has strongly advocated for removal of sanctions against India imposed after the Pokharan-II nuclear test;

(b) whether the opinion in the official circle is also in India's favour; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken to secure lifting of these sanctions as early as possible?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The United States has lifted a number of unilateral restrictions imposed on India after the nuclear tests in May 1998. Several members of the United States Congress and foreign policy experts have expressed the opinion that the United States should lift the remaining restrictions on India.

(b) Yes, Sir. Since entering office in January 2001, the new U.S. Administration has conveyed on a number of occasions, both in bilateral meetings and publicly, that it has initiated the review process for lifting the remaining sanctions against India, including through consultations with the United States Congress.

(c) Government has consistently maintained that all unilateral U.S. restrictions against India are unjustified and counter-productive and should be completely removed in order to create a more broad-based, forward looking and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries.

Bush Administration's Plan for Missile Defence System

1277. DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA:

SHRI C.O. POULOSE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since supported the Bush administration's plan for a Missile Defence System;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that he himself was against such support earlier; and

(d) if so, the reasons for change?